

On the Meaning and Function of *Ādeśá* in the Early Upaniṣads

Diwakar Acharya¹

Published online: 5 June 2017

© The Author(s) 2017. This article is an open access publication

Abstract Many modern scholars working on the early Upaniṣads translate *ādeśa* as substitute, substitution, or the method or rule of substitution. The choice of this translation, which often affects the larger analysis of the text, started only in 1960s, with the late Paul Thieme who understood ‘substitute/substitution’ as the meaning of *ādeśa* in the Pāṇinian tradition and introduced that meaning to Upaniṣadic analysis. After carefully analysing all relevant passages in their contexts—not just the individual sentences in which the term occurs, this paper rejects Thieme’s idea. It shows that the term never violates its etymological meaning of indication, and argues that *ādeśa* by itself does not mean substitute or replacement even in the Pāṇinian tradition. This paper further shows that *ādeśa*, usually used in the plural, was once the formal term referring to the class/genre of Vedic teachings now known as Upaniṣads. As it analyses different passages from the early Upaniṣads, this paper touches on the origin and composition of some of the Upaniṣads, for example arguing that the original Upaniṣadic teaching of the archaic Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyas begins eleven sections before the formal beginning of the *Brhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

Keywords *Ādeśa* · Early Upaniṣads · *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* · Pāṇini

Introduction

The Sanskrit noun *ādeśá* is derived from the root *diś* with the preverb ‘*ā*’ and suffix ‘*a*.’ The root *diś* means ‘to indicate/to point out’ and the prefix ‘*ā*’ adds to this meaning a sense of direction, ‘near/towards/at.’ The suffix ‘*a*’ makes it a noun. This

✉ Diwakar Acharya
acharyadiwakar@gmail.com

¹ All Souls College, Oxford University, Oxford OX1 4AL, UK

noun can convey any of the senses of agent, object, or action, but if the accent is placed on the suffix, the possibility of an action noun is excluded. We know from its two occurrences in the *Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa* (hereafter ŚB), one in the Tenth book (X.4.5.1) and the other in the part forming the *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (II.3.11), that *ādeśá* is so accented. Thus we are left with two possibilities: *ādeśá* in the early Upaniṣadic usage is either an agent or an object of indication, that which indicates or that which is indicated.

Śaṅkara, the earliest among traditional commentators, has interpreted this term differently in different places, but all of his interpretations suggest that he understood it in the sense of some kind of instruction or teaching. For example, in one instance he has taken it to be the Vedic injunction (*vidhi*) in general (cf. *Bhāṣya* on TU I.11.4), in another the Brāhmaṇa texts (cf. *Bhāṣya* on TU II.3.1), and in yet another certain instructions from the Upaniṣads (cf. *Bhāṣya* on ChU III.5.1). In BĀU II.3.11, he has taken it in its literal sense of indication and interpreted it as the indicated teaching.

Among Indologists, Max Müller (Müller1879, pp. 40, 92) translated this term as ‘doctrine’ and ‘instruction.’ Böhtlingk rendered it as ‘Ausspruch’ (dictum) (1889a: translation part, p. 27) in his German translation of the BĀU published together with an edition of the Mādhyandina recension of the text, and Oldenberg (1896, p. 461) translated it as ‘Anweisung’ (instruction). Deussen (1921) has, like Oldenberg, rendered the term as ‘Anweisung’ and also ‘Unterweisung,’ or otherwise, more literally as ‘Bezeichnung’ (designation/ indication), but he has often supplied additional explanations borrowed from Śaṅkara, each time distinguishing the meaning slightly differently.¹ Likewise, Geldner translated it thrice (1928, pp. 110, 136, 137) as ‘Veranschaulichung’ (demonstration) and once (1928, p. 149) as ‘Verdeutlichung’ (illustration), both of which stand very close to the literal meaning, ‘indication.’ In 1968, Paul Thieme criticized all available interpretations of *ādeśá*, particularly the one offered by Geldner. Referring to Pāṇini’s use of *ādeśa* in the technical sense of a ‘substitute’ or ‘substitution’ in his grammar, he proposed to take the term in that very sense of ‘substitution’ or ‘replacement’ (Ersetzung), even in the ŚB and early Upaniṣads.

Thieme concluded his article on *ādeśa* in a rather mystical manner, citing and narrating Patañjali’s words expressed in a different context: “*kiṃ punar atrārthasatattvam? devā etaj jñātum arhanti* (Patañjali, *Mahābhāṣya*, I S.492, Z.22 f.): «Was aber ist hier die tatsächliche Wahrheit?—Götter [nur] brauchen (oder: ‘dürfen beanspruchen’) das zu wissen!»” This probably means that Thieme himself was not much satisfied with his treatment of the topic. Nevertheless, he had begun to translate the term in this way already before the publication of this paper (cf. e.g. Thieme 1966, p. 44).

At this point I must mention another publication on the same topic by Yasuke Ikari, in Japanese, published in 1969. As he has mentioned at the end of his article, Ikari was working on the topic independently and came to know about Thieme’s article only at about the time his own article was ready. Interestingly, his conclusion

¹ Cf. Deussen (1921, pp. 102, 115, 160, 185, 186, 208, 223, 229–230, 414).

is not different from Thieme's, and the ground for that conclusion, too, is the same: the meaning of *ādeśā* known to the traditional Sanskrit grammarians.

As Kahrs (1998, p. 181) said, however, "there is no textual evidence which warrants the conclusion that *ādeśā* means 'substitute' or 'substitution' rather than 'specification; teaching; instruction' or 'Anweisung; Vorschrift' in the Brāhmaṇas and oldest Upaniṣads. Indeed, some of the examples adduced by Thieme seem rather to speak against his own case." Kahrs (ibid.) presents the case of *neti neti* and argues that "Thieme's conclusion is wrong." As Kahrs has further pointed out (ibid.), Wezler (1972, p. 7), too, doubts the conclusion of Thieme and Ikari, because, if *ādeśā* were already used in the sense of 'substitute, substitution' in the Brāhmaṇas and early Upaniṣads, one would expect the same in the Kalpasūtras, but the term is found there in fact only in the sense of a) 'indication, specification' (Anzeige, Angabe) and b) 'instruction, prescription' (Anweisung, Vorschrift).' As Kahrs rightly observes (1998, p. 182), "[t]he surprising fact that we do not meet with this meaning in the Kalpasūtras once again warrants the conclusion that Thieme was wrong or at least that he was reading too much into his textual evidence."

Paying no attention to all this criticism, more recent scholars² dealing with the early Upaniṣads have closely followed Thieme, making little or no modification to his original idea, and this trend continues into the present.³ Some go with substitution, others with replacement or identification, and some even draw philosophical and theoretical implications from these translations.⁴ I argue here that this has led the analysis of *ādeśā* and other associated concepts in the early Upaniṣads in a wrong direction. Thieme placed too much weight on the Sanskrit grammarians of the Pāṇinian tradition and thought that the abstracted technical value assigned to the term in that tradition should be valid even in the ŚB and early Upaniṣads.

I assert that, in Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī* itself, *ādeśā* does not mean anything more than indication or assignment of a new element. The notion of replacement or substitution comes into being only after P. I.1.49, *ṣaṣṭhī sthāneyogā*, supplies the word *sthāne* ('in place') after the word ending in the genitive case in every *ādeśasūtra*. Thus, 'X+Genitive *sthāne* Y+Nominative *ādeśah*' means 'assignment of Y in place of X,' which can be simplified as 'substitution of X by Y.' If substitution were the meaning of *ādeśā*, Pāṇini, who is famed for his brevity, would not have wasted six heavy syllables to write P. I.1.49. In any case, Thieme's influence has decidedly affected scholarly interpretation of Upaniṣadic philosophy. Therefore, in this paper, consistent with the work of Kahrs and others who are

² For example, Visigalli (2014, p. 194), Ganeri (2012, p. 32), Slaje (2009, p. 305, 2010, pp. 23–28), Olivelle (1998, p. 247). Falk (1986, p. 86) had subscribed to Thieme's view in the past, but as Slaje (2010, p. 24, fn. 86) indicates, he has now 'proposed to take *ādeśā* in Upaniṣadic contexts in the sense of "association of ideas" rather than in that of "substitution."' Scholars are clearly beginning to rethink this issue. There are other scholars who do not follow Thieme, they all use different terms none of which is far from 'teaching,' for example, 'symbolic statement' (Roebuck 2000, p. 158), 'purport' (Hock 2002, p. 283), 'assertion' (Gotō 2005, p. 72).

³ See Slaje (2010, p. 23, fn. 85) for his criticism of Olivelle's slight modification of Thieme's interpretation of *ādeśā* in ChU VI.

⁴ See, e.g., Ganeri (2012, p. 32), Michaels (2004, p. 337), and Halbfass (1990, pp. 413, 575). The latter takes *ādeśā* in the sense of "subordinating and reductive "identification" of cosmic and physical phenomena or occurrences of everyday life."

reconsidering the meaning of *ādeśa*. I shall critically read all those passages of the early Upaniṣads where *ādeśa* occurs so that I can convincingly explain the meaning and function of *ādeśa* in these texts. This paper, however, is not limited to the task of refuting one rendering of the term *ādeśa* and proposing another. I will elucidate as I proceed a number of important and interesting issues associated with the status and function of *ādeśa* that have gone unnoticed.

Aspects of the Upaniṣadic *ādeśas*

Ādeśa as a Method

In an earlier publication (Acharya 2013), I analysed the Gārgya-Ajātaśatru dialogue from the *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* (hereafter BĀU) critically and showed that the enigmatic expression, *nēti nēti*, which is marked as an *ādeśā*, abbreviates Ajātaśatru's negative responses in a way and indicates what method he has applied for the comprehensive understanding of the truth. There, one by one, Ajātaśatru first denies all individual specifications proposed by Gārgya for the highest principle. Once that process is complete, he talks about the manifold appearance of reality and finally imparts the *ādeśā* of *nēti nēti*, the essential point or method applied throughout his dialogue. This is the method of consecutive critical negation needed to understand the complete truth of the Reality of reality. Thus, with the *ādeśa* of *nēti nēti* Ajātaśatru teaches Gārgya the fact that as long as one is not awakened to the totality of truth one should say 'no' to all approximated specifications or identifications as he did. Thus the *ādeśā* of *nēti nēti* has nothing to do with substitution, replacement, or even identification; it is the core teaching indicated repeatedly throughout that discourse. At the same time, it is a method for indicating the Reality of reality, namely, the highest principle of *puruṣa*. Therefore, we do not need to diverge from the original meaning of the root and preverb involved. One should not look for a technical or a conventional meaning of a word unless its etymological meaning is impossible. It was this new understanding of *ādeśā* in the Gārgya-Ajātaśatru dialogue that led me to suspect and scrutinize the interpretation of *ādeśā* in all early Upaniṣadic passages.

Ādeśa as a Teaching, Long or Short

In a recent article (Acharya 2015) on the first discourse of Āruṇi and Śvetaketu in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* (hereafter ChU) 6.1, I found among other things that in this discourse, too, as in the discourse of Gārgya and Ajātaśatru, *ādeśa* has to do with indication. In this discourse *ādeśa* takes the form of a cosmogonic teaching that indicates the three primaeva entities of heat, water, and food as the reality behind all and everything in the world. According to this teaching, all end products here, including human persons, are made of nothing but these three primaeva entities. This teaching thus indicates the truth/reality behind everything, and so is viewed as an *ādeśa*, an indicatory knowledge. The reader may consult my papers for further details beyond the above summary of the points relevant to this paper.

In this paper I shall deal with the meaning and function of *ādeśa* in the rest of the occurrences of the term in later Vedic literature, which are altogether ten: one in a very short passage of the ŚB, five in more in the ChU, two in the *Taittirīya Upaniṣad* (hereafter TU), and two in the later part of the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* (hereafter JUB), one of which falls in the portion better known as the *Kena Upaniṣad* (hereafter KeU). I shall read the relevant discourses in full in order to demonstrate the coherence of my analysis and its fidelity to the context.

In his article on *ādeśa*, Thieme tried to apply his proposed meaning of the term to many of the Upaniṣadic occurrences, but he did not mention two occurrences of the term in the TU, and one more in the JUB.⁵ I begin with these two TU occurrences. My opinion is that they hold the key to the understanding of the Upaniṣadic meaning of the term, because they refer to *ādeśa* in general, not to any one *ādeśa* specifically. Once the meaning is established in these passages, I will re-examine the other passages where Thieme's interpretation has been till now imposed.

TU I.11.1–4: *vedam anūcyācāryō 'ntevāsinam anuśāsti satyaṃ vada dharmam cara svādhyāyān mā pramada ... athābhyākhyāteṣu ye tatra brāhmaṇāḥ saṃmarśinaḥ yuktā āyuktāḥ alūkṣā dharmakāmāḥ syuḥ yathā te teṣu varteran tathā teṣu vartethāḥ eṣa ādeśaḥ eṣa upadeśaḥ eṣā vedopaniṣat etad anuśāsanam evam upāsitavyam evam u caitad upāsyam*

Having finished teaching the Veda, the teacher instructs his resident pupil: “Speak the truth. Practice the Dharma. Do not be remiss in the [duty of] regular recitation of the Veda. ... Now, in case there are people who have been falsely accused⁶—as those Brahmins capable of judgement, experienced, qualified, gentle, and attached to the Dharma, atreat them so you should treat them.”

“This is the teaching indicated (*ādeśa*). This is the teaching communicated (*upadeśa*). This is the teaching underlying the Veda (*vedopaniṣad*). This is the instruction (*anuśāsanā*). In this way it should be revered. In this way, again, it should be revered.”

⁵ Unlike Thieme, Ikari (1969, p. 685) mentions at least one of these passages and acknowledges that the idea of ‘substitution/substitute’ does not work there on in ChU III.5.3, which Thieme did discuss. He does not analyze these passages but simply states that he doubts the meaning he is proposing fits these contexts.

Slaje presents his analysis of all the Upaniṣadic passages that Thieme had analyzed to substantiate his case (2010, pp. 23–28), classifying Upaniṣadic *ādeśās* “into word-, sentence-, and method-replacements.” He mentions (2010, pp. 24, fn. 88) the two occurrences of the term in the TU and says that they “are not expressive enough to serve as evidence.” Thus without mentioning Thieme he justifies the latter's omission of these two occurrences. None of the three authors, however, pays attention to the second occurrence of the term in the JUB.

⁶ This term appears again in the same sense in one more Vedic text, the *Kausikasūtra* (46.1–3), where the term definitely means a person falsely accused whose accusations a priest is supposed to wipe off with a short ritual act. The same combination of *abhyākhyā* is found in other verbal and nominal forms in Pali and Mahāyāna Buddhist texts in the same sense (cf. Edgerton 1953, p. 61, s.v. *abhyākhyāna*, *abhācīkṣati*).

Here the teacher's final instruction to the pupil before he goes home to begin a householder's life is claimed to be *ādeśa*, *upadeśa*, *upaniṣad*, and *anuśāsana*, all at once. The context clearly suggests that the teacher wants his pupil who is returning home to take this last set of instructions as the essential core of the whole education, and putting all his weight on it, names it with different terms which reflect various levels or aspects of teaching.⁷ Therefore here *ādeśa* cannot be anything but some kind of 'teaching.' We have known from the context of *néti néti* that an *ādeśa* is not a direct teaching stated verbally but a deeper and profound message underlying the ordinary direct teachings or texts. This fits well here because we have *upadeśa* to represent the latter.⁸ I have translated *ādeśa* in this passage as the indicated teaching by combining both denoted and connoted meanings of the term.

Ādeśa as a Genre of Vedic Teaching

I now present the other passage from the TU which hints at the significance of *ādeśa* and its formal status in the Vedic corpus. The second chapter of the TU teaches that the human person has five layers to his living body, one inside the other, all appearing like a human person but made of food, vital functions, mind, cognition, and bliss. The passage below describes the body of mind:

TU II.3.3: *tasmād vā etasmāt prāṇamayāt anyo 'ntara ātmā manomayaḥ tenaiṣa pūrṇaḥ sa vā eṣa puruṣavidha eva tasya puruṣavidhatām anv ayaṃ puruṣavidhaḥ tasya yajur eva śiraḥ ṛg dakṣiṇaḥ pakṣaḥ sāmottaraḥ pakṣaḥ ādeśa ātmā atharvāṅgirasah pucchaṃ pratiṣṭhā*

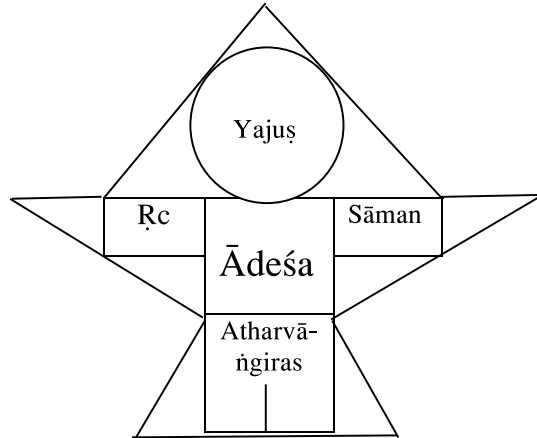
Different from that very body of vital functions and interior to it is the body of mind. With this [body of mind], that [body of vital functions] is filled up. That very [body of vital functions] is just like the human person. In conformity with the human appearance of that body, this [body of mind, too,] is like the human person. Of this [body of mind], the head is the Yajur formulas; the right side is the Ṛc verses; the left side is the Sāman songs; the [main] body is the *Ādeśa*; and the tail,⁹ the stand, is the Atharvāṅgiras spells.

For the sake of clarity, I present here a drawing that illustrates the body of mind, i.e., the body of knowledge, imagined in the passage above. In this drawing, we can observe that *Ādeśa* serves the main body, the torso, while the four Vedas constitute the

⁷ Śaṅkara relates *ādeśa* to *vidhi*, *upadeśa* to *arthavāda*, *vedopaniṣad* to Vedānta teachings, and *anuśāsana* to practical moral teachings. As usual, Deussen (1921, p. 223) relies on Śaṅkara's wisdom.

⁸ In this passage, it is impossible to translate *ādeśa* as substitution. Thieme has missed out this passage but Olivelle (1998, p. 299) and Slaje (2009, p. 52) impose Thieme's interpretation even in this passage, apparently without thinking much whether their rendering fits the context or not.

⁹ This teaching is based on speculation around the *agnicayana*, the piling up of Agni as the fire altar in the shape of a bird built with five layers of bricks (cf. van Buitenen 1962, p. 32). After death the sacrificer identified with Prajāpati is believed to fly with this body of the bird to the sky and attain the highest heaven (cf. Keith 1925, pp. 465–466). For this reason, the text mentions wings and the tail.

Illustration 1 The body of mind

head, the two sides or wings, and the tail or the stand attached to the torso. This implies that *Ādeśa* here is the thing in the centre that connects all Vedic speech formulations and is associated with all of them. *Ādeśa* here is something independent, essential and central; it cannot be a substitute for anything (Illustration 1).

Ādeśas in the Divine Beehive

The status of *ādeśa* is confirmed in ChU III.1–5, where the text follows the same scheme of fivefold division to depict the sun as the honey of the gods suspended from heaven, while the beams of light in the intermediate region between heaven and earth are seen as bee’s larvae in the hive. Here, *ādeśa* is placed at the top centre, and the four speech forms from the four Vedas are placed on four sides. This time, as with other Vedic speech forms, *ādeśa* is used in the plural, and it is additionally described as secret. Let us read and translate this interesting passage:

III.1.1 *asau vā ādityo devamadhu tasya dyaur eva tiraścīnavamśaḥ
antarikṣam apūpaḥ marīcayāḥ putrāḥ*

That very sun up there is the honey¹⁰ of the gods.¹¹ Heaven itself is the horizontal bar on which it hangs; the intermediate region is the honeycomb (*apūpa*); [and] the lightbeams are the larvae.

¹⁰ The same epithet, ‘the honey of the gods,’ though not in a compound, is attributed to the Vāmadevya Sāman in the JB (I.144) and to the clarified butter twice in the KS (26.3 and 26.8) and once in the MS (III.9.3).

¹¹ I do not doubt that here the honey of the gods is the topic, the subject (see also my analysis on the next page), but following the original order of nouns I have placed the sun first. The sun comes first not just because it is a predicate providing new and exciting information but also because the sun is in front of the eyes of the interlocutors. The speaker points at the sun and says that ‘*that there* is the honey of the gods I am talking about.’ Also in the rest of the description, I place the predicate first because that provides the new information and needs to be highlighted.

III.1.2–4 *tasya ye prāñco raśmayas tā evāsyā prācyo madhunāḍyah ṛca eva madhukṛtaḥ ṛgveda eva puṣpam tā amṛtā āpaḥ tā vā etā ṛcaḥ etam ṛgvedam abhyatapan tasyābhitaptasya yaśas teja indriyaṃ vīryam annādyam raso 'jāyata tad vyakṣarat tad ādityam abhito 'śrayat tad vā etad yad etad ādityasya rohitam rūpam*

Those very rays on [the sun]’s east side are the veins of honey on the east side of it. The very Ṛc verses are the honey makers. The Ṛgveda itself is a flower [and] it is the waters of immortality [collected from that flower and transported to the hive].¹² Precisely these very Ṛc verses incubated the Ṛgveda. When it was incubated, the essence was generated in the form of lustre, brilliance, power, vigour, and food. That flowed out and spread around the sun; and exactly that is this here that forms the red appearance of the sun.

Before I proceed further, it is necessary to reflect on the context and logic of this comparison between the sun and honey in a beehive. We are told that honey is indeed the ultimate of all juicy drinks (JB I.224, III.364: *anto vai rasānām madhu*), and already in the Ṛgveda, *mādhu* is used as an epithet or epithetic name of Soma and other drinks of the gods offered to them here on earth by the sacrificer, or *amṛta* that is the drink of immortality existing in heaven. It is noteworthy that our text, too, switches from *madhu* to *amṛta* in the concluding portion of the description of the honey of the gods (cf. ChU III.5). Here *amṛta*, described as *madhu* is the food of the gods of all classes, not the primordial cosmic water as Kuiper had thought (see fn. 12 for details). As we are told later in the text (cf. ChU III.6–III.11), the gods do not eat or drink the drink of immortality, the honey of the sun, but are sated by seeing it.

In my opinion, the narrator of our text wants to describe how this drink of immortality, the honey of the gods, is constantly produced in the sun just as normal honey is produced in a beehive. This is his main agenda, and the honey of the gods is his topic. In order to understand his description properly, however, we first need to pay attention to what precedes and follows it.

What immediately precedes the description of the sun as the honey of the gods (ChU III.1–III.5) is an Upaniṣadic ritual of singing a Sāman and offering an oblation

¹² Kuiper (1960–1961) has explained why Böhtlingk (1889b) took *tāh* as a pronoun referring to the Ṛgveda in the preceding sentence but attracted to the predicate *amṛtā āpaḥ*. I follow Kuiper in this syntactical analysis. In the same paper, Kuiper writes that “the *amṛtā āpaḥ* do not fit into the picture of the cosmic bee-hive” and makes some comments to puzzle the problem out. He writes (1960–1961, pp. 37–38), “the association which has brought about the curious diversion from bee and flower to the “immortal waters” can only have been evoked by the word *madhu*. It is a well-known fact that in the potential idiom of the Vedic singers *mādhu* could denote the essence (*rāsa*) of the cosmic waters, which was identified with *sōma* and *amṛta*.” He understands *amṛtā āpaḥ* to be the cosmic waters, and states that the idea of a bee brooding on a flower for *madhu* “is considered equivalent to Prajāpati’s creation act of brooding upon the waters, which also contains *madhu*” (ibid. 38). He further writes, “if the Rīgveda is the flower which yields *madhu*, it accordingly is also the cosmic waters” (ibid.). Thus, he provides a lot of useful information, but his explanation does not make a breakthrough and he still thinks that *amṛtā āpaḥ* do not fit the picture of the beehive. I do not think that the primordial comic waters form part of the context. For my interpretations, see the commentary after the translation of ChU III.1.

just before each of the three pressings of Soma (ChU II.24). As this section says, the first and second pressings are for the Vasus and Rudras respectively, while the third is for the Ādityas together with the All-gods, the Viśvedevas. In this Upaniṣadic ritual the sacrificer with his song requests all three group of gods in turn to open the doors for him to their respective worlds, because after living his full life here he will be going to their worlds. He also says that he wants to see them for the sake of his sovereignty. Here the text says that the Vasus and other gods provide the sacrificer who has performed this extra ritual with the pressing offered to them; what is implied, obviously, is that they do so when he goes to their worlds.

After the description of the sun as the honey in heaven, there follows an account (ChU III.6–III.11) describing how the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, Maruts and Sādhyas enjoy the sun's honey from five different sides.¹³ The text also says that one who knows of the immortal drink of the Vasus, and so on, will become one among them in their respective world for impossibly long times, enjoy the same drink, and be the master of himself. All this is the wish the sacrificer makes at the time of performance of the Upaniṣadic ritual. Now he enters the worlds of the group of gods he venerated; he becomes his own master; and has access to the drink of immortality. From the ritualistic point of view, the honey in heaven is the transformed essence of the juice the sacrificed pressed and offered to the Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, and others. Thus, it is clear that we cannot explain the honey of the gods without paying attention to what preceds and follows these units.

Now coming to the analogical equations, the sun's rays are the honey veins, and stuck to these veins are the lightbeams imagined as the larvae. The Ṛgveda and other Vedic texts are viewed as flowers and the nectar they contain belongs to them as a component of them. The flowers are extraordinary and so is their nectar. However, the Veda-flowers are here on earth; they enclose the bees of the Ṛc and of the other Vedic mantras or spells. As soon as these mantras are uttered in rituals,¹⁴ mantra-bees are activated. They incubate in the Veda-flowers and rise from them carrying their essence which flows out in the form of lustre and other virtues as the result of incubation. As they reach the sun, the essence they have carried is transformed and added to the eternal supply of the drink of immortality there.

III.2.1–3 *atha ye śya dakṣiṇā raśmayas tā evāsyā dakṣiṇā madhunādyāḥ
yajūṃsy eva madhukṛtaḥ yajurveda eva puṣpaṃ tā amṛtā āpaḥ tāni
vā etāni yajūṃsy etam yajurvedam abhyatapan tasyābhitaptasya
yaśas teja indriyaṃ vīryam annādyaṃ raso jāyata tad vyākṣarat tad
ādityam abhito śrayat tad vā etad yad etad ādityasya suklaṃ rūpam*

¹³ Clearly the original triadic scheme has been modified to a pentadic model. Earlier in II.24 the Viśvedevas were grouped together with the Ādityas, making three sets of gods and three offerings. In this part, however, the Viśvedevas disappear and the Maruts and Sādhyas appear as the fourth and fifth groups of the gods. The first three remain the same: the Vasus, Rudras, and Ādityas.

¹⁴ Interpreting *tāḥ amṛtā āpaḥ* Śaṅkara (cf. *Bhāṣya* on ChU III.1.2–3) writes that the drinks such as Soma, ghee, and milk offered in the fire during the ritual are transformed by the sacred fire and become the drink of immortality. Practically he is not wrong, because as these Vedic mantras are uttered, such offerings are made.

Now, those very rays on [the sun]'s south side are the veins of honey on the south side of it. The very Yajus formulas are the honey makers. The Yajurveda itself is a flower¹⁵ [and] it is the waters of immortality [collected from that flower and transported to the hive]. Precisely these very Yajus formulas incubated the Yajurveda. When it was incubated, the essence was generated in the form of lustre, brilliance, power, vigour, and food. That flowed out and spread around the sun; and exactly that is this here that forms the white appearance of the sun.

III.3.1–3 *atha ye 'sya pratyaiṅco raśmayas tā evāsya praṭīcyo madhunāḍyāḥ sāmāny eva madhukṛtaḥ sāmaveda eva puṣpam tā amṛtā āpaḥ tāni vā etāni sāmāny etaṃ sāmavedam abhyatapan tasyābhitaptasya yaśas teja indriyaṃ vīryam annādyam raso 'jāyata tad vyakṣarat tad ādityam abhito 'śrayat tad vā etad yad etad ādityasya kṛṣṇam rūpam*

Now, those very rays on [the sun]'s west side are the honey veins on the west side of it. The very Sāman songs are the honey makers. The Sāmaveda itself is a flower [and] it is the waters of immortality [collected from that flower and transported to the hive]. Precisely these very Sāman songs incubated the Sāmaveda. When it was incubated, the essence was generated in the form of lustre, brilliance, power, vigour, and food. That flowed out and spread around the sun; and exactly that is this here that forms the black appearance of the sun.

III.4.1–3 *atha ye 'syodaṅco raśmayas tā evāsyodīcyo madhunāḍyāḥ atharvāṅgirasa eva madhukṛtaḥ itihāsapurāṇam puṣpam tā amṛtā āpaḥ te vā ete atharvāṅgirasa etad itihāsapurāṇam abhyatapan tasyābhitaptasya yaśas teja indriyāṃ vīryam annādyam raso 'jāyata tad vyakṣarat tad ādityam abhito 'śrayat tad vā etad yad etad ādityasya paraḥkṛṣṇam rūpam*

Now, those very rays on [the sun]'s north side are the honey veins on the north side of it. The very Atharvāṅgiras spells are the honey makers. The corpus of *itihāsapurāṇa* itself is a flower [and] it is the waters of immortality [collected from that flower and transported to the hive]. Precisely these very Atharvāṅgiras spells incubated the corpus of *itihāsapurāṇa*. When it was incubated, the essence was generated in the form of lustre, brilliance, power, vigour, and food. That flowed out and spread around the sun; and exactly that is this here that forms the appearance of the sun beyond black.

¹⁵ Let us take note of the fact that this passage relates the corpus of Atharvāṅgiras spells to the corpus of past accounts and ancient tales: *itihāsapurāṇa*. Twice in the Seventh chapter of the ChU (VII.1.2 and VII.2.1) *itihāsapurāṇa* appears following the four Vedas as the fifth and independent entity. In the BĀU (II.4.10 = IV.1.7) the compound is dissolved and *itihāsa* and *purāṇa* appear separately, but again, they follow the four Vedas. Even in the MāiU (VI.33) *itihāsapurāṇa* can be seen holding the fifth place after the four Vedas. It is therefore really strange to see *itihāsapurāṇa* here tied to the Atharvāṅgiras spells. By analogy with the other sections, the implication would be that the Atharvāṅgiras spells are the contents of the *itihāsapurāṇa*.

III.5.1–3 *atha ye 'syordhvā raśmayas tā evāsyordhvā madhunāḍyaḥ guhyā evādeśā madhukṛtaḥ brahmaiva puṣpaṃ tā amṛtā āpaḥ te vā ete guhyā ādeśā etad brahma abhyatapan tasyābhitaptasya yaśas teja indriyaṃ vīryam annādyam raso 'jāyata tad vyakṣarat tad ādityam abhito 'śrayat tad vā etad yad etad ādityasya madhye kṣobhata iva*

Now, the very upward rays of the sun are the upward honey veins of it. The secret teachings indicated [by the Vedas] are the honey makers. *Brahman*, [namely, the entire Vedic corpus] itself is a flower [and] it is the waters of immortality [collected from that flower and transported to the hive]. Precisely these secret¹⁶ teachings indicated [by the Vedas] incubated *brahman*. When it was incubated, the essence was generated in the form of lustre, brilliance, power, vigour, and food. That flowed out and spread around the sun; and exactly that is this here that appears like flickering in the middle of the sun.

III.5.4 *te vā ete rasānām rasāḥ vedā hi rasāḥ teṣām ete rasāḥ tāni vā etāny amṛtānām amṛtāni vedā hy amṛtāḥ teṣām etāny amṛtāni*

These very [teachings indicated by the Vedas] are the essence of all essences. For the Vedas are types of essences [and] these are their essence. These very [teachings] are the ambrosia of ambrosia. For the Vedas are ambrosia, and these are their ambrosia.

This description of a beehive does not fit the beehive of the common European-African honeybees now spread everywhere. First of all, the *Upaniṣad* is describing an open-space exposed nest, hanging by an horizontal bar or a branch of a tree. What best fits this description is the nest of *Apis Florea*, the dwarf honeybee of Asia¹⁷ (see a good example of the round nest of this species of bees from Thailand on the next page; source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apis_florea). In order to construct the divine honey in the heavenly beehive, the above passage has used the same components used to construct the subtle body of mind in the TU passage read immediately before this one. The only difference in these two passages is that in the TU four Vedic speech formulations were fitted as the head, two sides, and the hinder part, and the *Ādeśas*, the fifth type of Vedic formulation, served as the central body, i.e., the torso, in order to make a body complete with limbs, whereas here they are arranged as four sides and the top to construct the heavenly beehive equated to the sun (Illustration 2).

Based on this information, we must take the secret *ādeśas* of ChU III.5.3 as a fifth entity, something independent, essential and central in itself. If we follow the

¹⁶ This characterisation of *ādeśa* as something secret reminds us of its Upaniṣadic nature, the fact that an *ādeśa* indicates something very close but underlying the apparent.

¹⁷ As Akrotanakul (1990, Chapter 1A) describes, “[t]he distribution area of *A. florea* is generally confined to warm climates. In the west, the species is present in the warmer parts of Oman, Iran and Pakistan, through the Indian sub-continent and Sri Lanka. It is found as far-east as Indonesia, but its primary distribution centre is southeast Asia. Rarely found at altitudes above 1500 m, the bee is absent north of the Himalayas. It is frequently found in tropical forests, in woods and even in farming areas.”

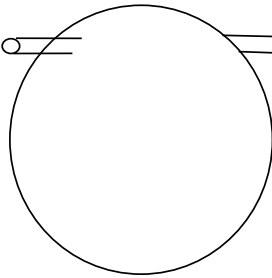
The Divine Honey

Honey channels → Upward rays
 Honey bees → Secret Ādeśas
 Flower/ nectars → brahman

Flowing essence → Appearing like flickering in the middle

Honey channels → Northward rays
 Honey bees → Atharvāṅgiras verses
 Flower/nectars → Itihāsapurāṇa
 Flowing essence → Appearance beyond black

Honey channels → Westward rays
 Honey bees → Sāman hymns
 Flower/nectars → Sāmaveda
 Flowing essence → Black appearance



Honey channels → Eastward rays
 Honey bees → Ṛg verses
 Flower/nectars → Ṛgveda
 Flowing essence → Red appearance

Honey channels → Southward rays
 Honey bees → Yajus formulas
 Flower/nectar → Yajurveda
 Flowing essence → White appearance



A nest of Apis Florea hanging from a branch
 (credit: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apis_florea)

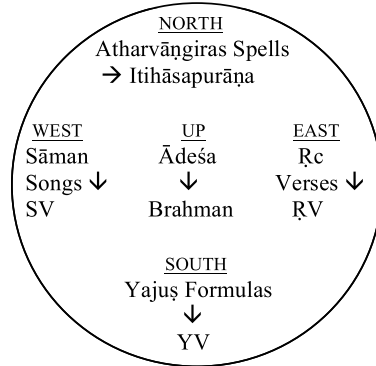


Illustration 2 Fivefold division of the divine beehive, the top and four quarters, according to ChU III.1–5

metaphorical scheme of this passage which views the Vedic speech forms as bees and the Vedic texts as flowers, we can further say that, like the Ṛc verses and other Vedic speech forms, the Ādeśas are specific formulations of Vedic speech and *brahman* is the text corpus where they are located just as the Ṛg verses are located in the Ṛgveda.¹⁸ Since the Vedas are said to be the essences and the *ādeśas* are said in turn to be their essence, the latter cannot be located in one particular Veda but

¹⁸ Olivelle (1996, p. 214) has analysed this whole episode, tabulated all entites on five sides of the divine beehive, and has placed *ādeśa* as well as *brahman* in the fifth column. Since the other four flowers are the four Vedas, he rightly observes that, “[t]he fifth flower, that is *brahman*, therefore, must also fall within the category of “Veda.”” Further, in a footnote (ibid. 214, fn 43), he writes that “[i]f we are to carry the metaphor of the vedic formulae and vedic texts over to *ādeśa* and *brahman*, then *ādeśa* would be individual statements of formulations, while *brahman* would be a collection in which those *ādeśas* are contained.” Beyond this point, he does not continue with this possibility, and soon even ignores that *brahman* should here be a corpus of vedic formulations, and begins citing and analyzing passages where *brahman* means “a particular formulation.”

must be in all of the Vedas. *Brahman* here should be the entire Vedic corpus, all the Vedas together, the entirety of Vedic knowledge.

Moreover, in the following sections of the same discourse (III.6–III.10), we are told that four classes of gods consume the honey flowing out on four sides of the divine beehive: Vasus, Rudras, Ādityas, and Maruts, and the honey on the top of the hive is consumed by the Sādhyas. We are also told that in the case of the Sādhyas both the “mouth” and drink are *brahman*. I think that the choice of the Sādhyas to match with *Ādeśas* and *brahman* is telling. The Sādhyas are the ancient gods beyond division and classification¹⁹ and *brahman* is analogous to them.

Putting all this information together with that we know from the two TU passages read earlier, we can now say that *ādeśā* should be the indicated teaching, the essence of all Vedic teachings. In fact, in all three passages that we have read thus far, we are in a position to interpret *ādeśā* in two ways, as ‘*the indicated teaching*,’ and also as ‘*the teaching indicating*’ a higher reality, a deeper truth. We can further say that this teaching is not simply the verbal teaching, the words of the Vedas, but the profound message between and beyond these lines, the core they all are pointing at. This core, this indicated teaching is verbalised by the Upaniṣads which, it is claimed, are the essence of the Vedas. It is possible that, at a very early phase, there existed a fixed or unfixed body of *sūtra*-like *ādeśā* statements indicating an otherwise inexplicable reality, and that these statements served as a foundation for early Upaniṣadic discourses. Since the earliest Upaniṣads, the BĀU and ChU, and also the JUB, now and then identify an individual statement as an *ādeśā* or *upaniṣad* and explain that statement,²⁰ it is possible that these texts are commenting on a body of archaic statements meant for a deeper contemplation for the sake of a deeper understanding of the truth.²¹

The ŚB Compendium of *Ādeśās*: The Predecessor of the BĀU

At this point, I would like to go to the earliest occurrence of the term *ādeśā* in the Tenth book of the ŚB, where the two terms *ādeśā* and *upaniṣad* are closely tied together. The passage is very short, and reads:

ŚB X.4.5.1: *āthādeśā upaniṣādām*

Now [come] the indicatory teachings of the underlying [principle]s.

¹⁹ Lanman’s commentary on an AV stanza mentioning the Sādhyas thus illuminates their status: “There are two kinds of gods: those with Indra at their head and the *sādhyā* ‘they who are to be won’ (*sādhyā* ‘what is to be brought into order, under control, or into comprehension’). They are thus the unknown, conceived as preceding the known. Later they are worked into the ordinary classification of Vasus, Rudras, etc.” (Whitney 1905, p. 391).

²⁰ In fact, beyond the marked *ādeśā* statements we can find some more such statements in the earliest Upaniṣads which could be identified as *ādeśās*.

²¹ Oldenberg has made a similar observation giving no detailed argument. He (1889, pp. 148–149) writes that “[t]he oldest Upaniṣads (also called *ādeśā* and *nāmadheya*) consisted in brief instructions as to in what form or under what definite name the pious had to conceive of the Brahman. Round this nucleus those further prose and metrical elements which followed the diction used in the Brāhmaṇa texts gathered themselves that we find combined in such texts as the Bṛhad Āraṇyaka or in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad.” I would say he is genuinely right about *ādeśā* but wrong about *nāmadheya*.

This phrase is actually a heading, appearing in the beginning of the last section of the Fourth chapter of the Tenth book. It is a heading not just for this small section but also for all sections, altogether eleven, in the Fifth and Sixth chapters, up to the end of the Tenth book. We should introduce here the information we have obtained from the TU and ChU passages read earlier, that *ādeśās* are Vedic speech formulations of a specific kind, a significant component of the Vedic corpus, and in some cases the totality of the Vedic corpus.²² In my opinion, ŚB X.4.5 begins the philosophical portion of the original/archaic Brāhmaṇa text of the Vājasaneyas, which continues to the end of that Brāhmaṇa at the end of what is now the Tenth book of the extended ŚB.²³

If we wish to understand the meaning of *ādeśa* and *upaniṣad* in ŚB X.4.5.1, we must consider which elements are included in this original Upaniṣad of the Vājasaneyas, the bulk of which is not included in the BĀU. The text first lists four different opinions on the identity of Agni, the god of the sacred fire in the form of the piled-up altar: The Sākāyanin-s venerated him as the Wind. Another unnamed group proclaimed that he is Āditya. Śraumatya and Hāliṅgava (together counted as one group) insisted that he was the Wind. The Śāṭyāyanin-s held that he is the year. Beyond these four, Celaka, a young member of the Śāṇḍilya family, equated the three bottom layers of the fire-altar with the three worlds, the fourth with the sacrificer himself, and the fifth with all the objects of his desire. We can see that these different opinions indicate the reality underlying the ritual of the great fire altar. So ends the Fourth chapter.

There are further indications of the hidden truth in the Fifth chapter. In the first section, the underlying reality of the fire is declared to be the threefold Vedic speech. In the second, the solar disc with its various components is identified with three entities in the divine, sacrificial, and bodily realms: first with different entities of the Vedic speech, then with the gold plate that has a carving of a human figure on its surface and is buried under the altar together with a lotus leaf, and finally with the human eye and the *puruṣa* claimed to be there. Next comes the identification of the fire with *puruṣa*; the body is then seen as the food and *puruṣa* as ‘the eater.’ The Third section begins with a commentary on some stanzas from the Ṛgvedic *Nāsadiyasūkta* and indulges in cosmogonic speculations. In the Fourth the

²² Apparently this function of *ādeśa* in a later period was completely taken over by the term *upaniṣad*.

²³ As scholars have known for a long time, the Original Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyas was composed in the North-Western regions of the Indian subcontinent and contained only the 6–10th books of the ŚB: books 6–9 as the main body of the text and book 10 as a kind of supplement. In this original Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyas, Śāṇḍilya is cited as the authority, therefore scholars refer to these books as Śāṇḍilya Books. This archaic text was later combined with another text compiled by a new generation of Vājasaneyas settled in the Gangetic plains. The main body of this new text was placed before the older text as books 1–5 of the ŚB; and the other half, a set of supplementary and even extra texts, was placed after the older text as books 11–14. In all these new books Yājñavalkya is cited as the authority and they are identified as Yājñavalkya Books. For a detailed discussion, see Gonda (1975, pp. 352–354).

anonymous narrator comes back to the issue of the identity of the fire, and shows how different opinions, not just those mentioned before but others not yet mentioned, can be reconciled. As he says, the sacrificial fire on the altar is this world, it is also the wind, the space, the sun, stars, metres, the year, the body, all beings, all gods, and still more. The Fifth section indicates why the fire-altar should be built with the fire facing upward.

In the First section of the Sixth chapter, King Aśvapati speaks of the reality of the Vaiśvānara fire. In the second, the internal realities of *arka*, *uktha*, and Agni as ‘the eater’ with reference to both macro- and microcosmic realms are explained. The third section teaches one to venerate *brahman* as truth, and also to venerate the cosmic Self. The fourth and fifth sections of this chapter are incorporated in the very beginning of the BĀU as units I.1.1 and I.1.2, while the rest of the Upaniṣad comes from the 14th, the last among the Yājñavalkya Books of the ŚB.

I do not want to digress here into a lengthy discussion on the compositional structure of the BĀU. That deserves a separate treatment. But I cannot avoid at least saying that whoever edited and canonised the BĀU known to us dropped a large portion of the older Upaniṣad better known as *ādeśā upaniṣādām*, because it mostly concerned the mystical philosophical interpretation of the sacrificial fire, and kept only a small part of it in the ‘Bṛhad’ (enlarged) version of their Upaniṣad.²⁴

To recap this section, the term *ādeśá* in its earliest occurrence, in the ŚB, means simply indicative teaching and stands as a title for a good and significant portion of the ŚB consisting of a specific kind of Vedic teachings. The original Upaniṣad of the Old Brāhmaṇa of the Vājasaneyas began with this heading: *athādeśā upaniṣādām*. The text units from this heading to the commencement of the extant BĀU more than qualify to be part of an Upaniṣad in terms of theme. This confirms the suggestion made at the end of the previous section, viz., that the body of Upaniṣadic teaching in the earliest stage of its development came in the form of *ādeśas* and their elaborations.

Individual *Ādeśas*

Here follows a treatment of all the early Upaniṣadic passages in which individual *ādeśa* statements occur. The length of the passages to be considered here varies; I discuss only that much of the text that is required to be clear about the content of a specific *ādeśa* in its context. As reported at the beginning of this paper, I have dealt with two *ādeśa* statements from the BĀU and ChU in two separate papers. Here I deal with the rest, which come from either the ChU or the JUB.

²⁴ This might be the foremost reason behind inclusion of *bṛhad* in the title of the *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

‘Brahman is Mind,’ ‘Brahman is Space’

Two *ādeśa* statements, explicitly designated as such,²⁵ feature side by side in ChU III.18. The whole of the eighteenth section is an elaboration of these two statements. In this passage, too, the scheme of fivefold division is followed, and the *ādeśa* is centrally located:

III.18.1 *mano brahmety upāsīta ity adhyātmam athādhidaivatam ākāśo brahma ity ubhayam ādiṣṭam bhavaty adhyātmam adhidaivataṃ ca*

Thinking ‘*Brahman* is mind,’ one should situate oneself closer to [*brahman*]. This is with reference to the bodily realm. Then with reference to the divine realm, [one should do so] thinking ‘*brahman* is space.’ Thus, [the *brahman*] is indicated both ways, with reference to the bodily realm and with reference to the divine realm.

III.18.2 *tad etac catuspād brahma vāk pādaḥ prāṇaḥ pādaś cakṣuḥ pādaḥ śrotraṃ pādaḥ ity adhyātmam athādhidaivatam agniḥ pādo vāyuh pāda ādityaḥ pādo diśaḥ pādaḥ ity ubhayam ādiṣṭam bhavaty adhyātmam adhidaivataṃ ca*

Thus in the following way *brahman* has four legs²⁶: one leg is speech, another leg is the vital breath, yet another leg is the faculty of sight, [and] yet another leg is the faculty of hearing. This is with regard to the bodily realm. Now with regard to the divine realm: one leg is the fire, another leg is the wind, yet another leg is the sun, and yet another leg is the quarters. Thus, [*brahman*] is indicated both ways, with reference to the bodily realm and also with reference to the divine realm.

III.18.3 *vāg eva brahmaṇas caturthaḥ pādaḥ so 'gninā jyotiṣā bhāti ca tapati ca bhāti ca tapati ca kīrtiyā yaśasā brahmavarcaśena ya evaṃ veda*

One of the four legs of *brahman* is Speech. It shines and glows with the fire [for its] splendour. He who knows this [reality] shines and glows with fame, glory, and the lustre of sacred knowledge.

III.18.4 *prāṇa eva brahmaṇas caturthaḥ pādaḥ sa vāyunā jyotiṣā bhāti ca tapati ca bhāti ca tapati ca kīrtiyā yaśasā brahmavarcaśena ya evaṃ veda*

One of the four legs of *brahman* is the vital breath. It shines and glows with the wind [for its] splendour. He who knows this [reality] shines and glows with fame, glory, and the lustre of sacred knowledge.

²⁵ In these two passages the term *ādeśa* does not appear but the past passive participle form of *ā+diś* because of a different mode of narration in the passive voice.

²⁶ We cannot translate *pāda* as ‘quarter’ unless we recognize that the whole transcends all four quarters. It seems likely that the elites of the agro-pastoral Vedic communities used the analogy of cattle to describe *brahman* or any other higher reality.

III.18.5 *caḥṣur eva brahmaṇas̄ caturthaḥ pādaḥ sa vāyunā jyotiṣā bhāti ca tapati ca bhāti ca tapati ca kīrtiyā yaśasā brahmavarcasena ya evaṃ veda*

One of the four legs of *brahman* is the visual faculty. It shines and glows with the sun [for its] splendour. He who knows this [reality] shines and glows with fame, glory, and the lustre of sacred knowledge.

III.18.6 *śrotam eva brahmaṇas̄ caturthaḥ pādaḥ sa digbhir jyotiṣā bhāti ca tapati ca bhāti ca tapati ca kīrtiyā yaśasā brahmavarcasena ya evaṃ veda*

One of the four legs of *brahman* is the auditory faculty. It shines and glows with the quarters [for its] splendour. He who knows this [reality] shines and glows with fame, glory, and the lustre of sacred knowledge.

This passage makes two major statements, ‘*brahman* is mind’ (*mano brahma*) and ‘*brahman* is space’ (*ākāśo brahma*). With these statements, as the text says, *brahman* is indicated in the bodily and divine realms respectively by means of mind and space. The two statements about *brahman* are its indications. For each, mind and space, are a representation/ manifestation of *brahman* in the respective realm and indicate the existence and glory of all-pervasive *brahman*.

The purport of this passage cannot be mutual substitution or even identification of the two realms. In the Upaniṣadic wisdom, the ultimate principle of *brahman* cannot be directly taught; anywhere, in any realm, it can only be indicated. Thus, the realities of the two realms are not equated here, neither mutually to each other nor to *brahman* individually.

As the text proceeds to elaborate on this, it states that in the bodily realm, when mind is put in the centre and seen as *brahman*, speech, the vital breath, and the visual and auditory faculties are connected to this centre, just as four legs are connected to the main body of an animal. Likewise, when space is placed in the centre and viewed as *brahman*, the fire, wind, sun, and quarters are connected to this centre. All this is an elaboration²⁷ of the two *ādeśa* statements. Here on the next page is a graphic depiction of the present scheme (Illustration 3).

A simple point we should not miss in the description above is that the four legs are connected to the main body at the centre as the fifth entity. In other words, this description does not follow a scheme of fourfold division but fivefold one. Without mind the four – speech, vital force, sight, and hearing – cannot make the set complete. The set of five appears repeatedly in the early Upaniṣads (e.g., ChU II.7.1–2, II.11.1, IV.3.3, V.1.7–15). Both descriptions above place the *ādeśas* indicating *brahman* in the centre. This goes well with the imagination of ChU III.1–5 we read earlier, which places the secret *ādeśas* in the central upward compartment of the divine beehive and depicts them as incubating *brahman*.

²⁷ This kind of elaboration we can possibly identify as *upavyākhyāna* after the use of the term in the next passage.

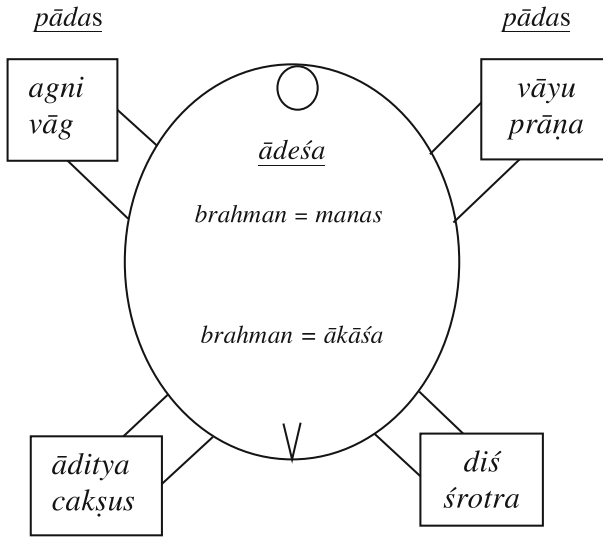


Illustration 3 Brahman with its four 'legs'

'Brahman is the Sun'

Ādeśa occurs again in the passage of the ChU that follows immediately.

III.19.1 *ādityo brahmety ādeśaḥ tasyopavyākhyānam asad evedam agra āsīt tat sad āsīt tat samabhavat tad āṇḍam niravartata tat saṃvatsarasya mātṛām aśayata tan nirabhidayata te āṇḍakapāle rajataṃ ca suvarṇaṃ cābhavatām*

"Brahman is the sun," this is an indicatory statement. [Here is] its explanation: This [all] here was indeed non-existent in the beginning. It was existent [in the next moment]. It developed. It formed into an egg. That [egg] was lying there for the exact period of a year. It split open [then]. The two halves of the eggshell became silver and gold.

III.19.2 *tad yad rajataṃ seyaṃ pṛthivī yat suvarṇaṃ sādyaṃ yaj jarāyu te parvatā yad ulbaṃ sa megho nīhāro yā dhamanayas tā nadyo yad vāsteyam udakaṃ sa samudraḥ*

There, what was the silver [half of the egg] is this earth, what was the golden [half of it, that] is heaven; what was the outer membrane is the mountains; what was the inner membrane is the clouds and the mist; what were the veins are the rivers; [and] what was the amniotic fluid is the ocean.

III.19.3 *atha yat tad ajāyata so 'sāv ādityas taṃ jāyamānaṃ ghoṣā ulūlavo 'nūdatiṣṭhant sarvāṇi ca bhūtāni sarve ca kāmās tasmāt tasyodayaṃ prati pratyāyanaṃ prati ghoṣā ulūlavo 'nūtiṣṭhanti sarvāṇi ca bhūtāni sarve ca kāmāḥ*

Now, that which was born in this way was that sun up there. And as it was being born, immediately roars and howls rose up, so did all beings and all desires. Therefore, roars and howls [even today] rise up at [its] rising and [its] setting, as do all beings and all [their] desires.

III.19.4 *sa ya etam evaṃ vidvān ādityaṃ brahmety upāste 'bhyāśo ha yad enaṃ sādḥavo ghoṣā ā ca gaccheyur upa ca nimreḍeran nimreḍeran*
The one who knows this and venerates the sun as *brahman*, has this reward at hand that nice sounds of cheering will reach and delight him, delight him.

In this passage, too, the *ādeśa* statement is indicating the highest principle of *brahman* by means of the sun. This myth of the creation of the sun brings the Upaniṣadic principle of *brahman* to the centre and makes the sun, the actual object of veneration, a manifestation of that principle and thus a means to approach it.

From the perspective of textual analysis, we can identify a special feature in this passage, that it formally attaches an elaboration (*upavyākhyāna*) to the *sūtra*-like *ādeśa*. This elaboration tells us that the sun is the first entity born from the cosmic egg, implying that this is the reason for declaring the sun to be *brahman*.

Two Correlated Indications of I-Awareness and the Self

I turn now to the last passage from the ChU where *ādeśa* appears twice, side by side, in two similar compounds. This passage occurs in the concluding portion of a discourse between Nārada and Sanatkumāra (VII.1–VII.26). As the discourse opens, Nārada asks Sanatkumāra to teach him. Sanatkumāra asks him to tell him first what he already knows so that he can then teach him what lies beyond that. Nārada lists all the texts starting from the Ṛgveda, and says that he knows mantras but not the self. He has heard, he reports, that a knower of the self goes across the realm of agony, and finding himself burning in agony he wants to know the self from Sanatkumāra. Sanatkumāra begins with 'name' and says that all mantras are nothing but names. He advises Nārada to meditate on this phenomenon of 'name' as *brahman* and tells him what one can expect to achieve through this. But Nārada is curious to know if there is something further, and Sanatkumāra speaks of 'speech.' Nārada continues his quest for some thing further and Sanatkumāra goes higher and higher, proposing newer entities, more pervasive and

more fundamental.²⁸ He offers the mind, imagination, thought, and so on. Towards the end of this process, Sanatkumāra moves from ‘happiness’ to ‘plenitude’ in the following way (ChU VII.23–24):

- VII.23 *yo vai bhūmā tat sukham nālpe sukham asti bhūmaiva sukham
bhūmā tv eva vijijñāsitavya iti bhūmānaṃ bhagavo vijijñāsa iti*
- VII.24.1 *yatra nānyat paśyati nānyac chr̥ṇoti nānyad vijānāti sa bhūmā
atha yatrānyat paśyaty anyac chr̥ṇoty anyad vijānāti tad alpam yo
vai bhūmā tad amṛtam atha yad alpam tan martyam
sa bhagavaḥ kasmin pratiṣṭhita iti sve mahimni yadi vā na mahimnīti*
- VII.24.2 *gośvam iha mahimety ācakṣate hastihiraṇyaṃ dāsabhāryaṃ
kṣetrāṇy āyatanānīti nāham evaṃ bravīmi bravīmīti hovāca anyo
hy anyasmin pratiṣṭhita iti*

‘What in fact is plenitude, that is happiness. There is no happiness in finitude. Plenitude itself is happiness. So, one should seek to know plenitude itself.’

‘Plenitude itself, sir, I seek to know.’

²⁸ At the end of this discourse (ChU VII.26), Sanatkumāra summarizes his teaching by mentioning each of the entities he presented before stating each time that the specified entity stems from the self. In this summary we have two additional entities that were not mentioned in the course of Sanatkumāra’s presentation of the entities in a hierarchical scheme. Furthermore, eight entities towards the top of the hierarchy that were given in the presentation are missing in this list. I understand this discrepancy as evidence for a revision of the original text. I assume that VII.26 constituted the list of entities in an older version of the text. For the sake of clarity I list below the entities mentioned in VII.26 and those found in the presentation from VII.1–VII.25 in two parallel columns:

VII.1–VII.25	VII.26	VII.1–VII.25	VII.26
X	[<i>karman</i>]	<i>ākāśa</i>	<i>ākāśa</i>
<i>mantra</i>	<i>mantra</i>	<i>smara</i>	<i>smara</i>
<i>nāman</i>	<i>nāman</i>	<i>āśā</i>	<i>āśā</i>
<i>vāg</i>	<i>vāg</i>	<i>prāṇa</i>	<i>prāṇa</i>
<i>manas</i>	<i>manas</i>	<i>satya</i>	X
<i>saṃkalpa</i>	<i>saṃkalpa</i>	<i>vijñāna</i>	X
<i>citta</i>	<i>citta</i>	<i>mati</i>	X
<i>dhyāna</i>	<i>dhyāna</i>	<i>śraddhā</i>	X
<i>vijñāna</i>	<i>vijñāna</i>	<i>niṣṭhā</i>	X
<i>bala</i>	<i>bala</i>	<i>kṛti</i>	X
<i>anna</i>	<i>anna</i>	<i>sukha</i>	X
X	<i>āvīrbhāvatirobhāva</i>	<i>bhūman</i>	X
<i>ap</i>	<i>ap</i>	<i>svamahiman</i>	X
<i>tejas</i>	<i>tejas</i>	<i>ātman</i>	<i>ātman</i>

If we assume that the list at the end of the text is older, that would mean that in one or many attempts, *satya*, *vijñāna*, *mati*, *śraddhā*, *niṣṭhā*, *kṛti*, *sukha*, *bhūman*, *svamahiman* were added just below *ātman*, the final entity, whereas the first entity of the old list, *karman*, and one more from the middle of the list, *āvīrbhāvatirobhāva*, were dropped.

Although this is not the proper place to examine critically the present list of hierarchical entities and the question of their originality, I record this discrepancy here because of its importance for the critical analysis of the early Upaniṣads.

‘Where one sees nothing else, hears nothing else, and knows nothing—that is plenitude. But where one sees something else, hears something, and knows something else—that is scarcity. What is in fact defined as plenitude, that is the immortal; and what is [defined as] scarcity, that is the mortal.’

‘On what is that based, sir?’

‘On one’s own grandeur; or rather, not on grandeur.’

‘Here [in this world] people regard cows and horses, elephants and precious metals, slaves and wives, fields, and houses as grandeur. I do not say so.’ ‘I say,’ he said, ‘one is [here] definitely based on the other.’

Here, Sanatkumāra first tells Nārada that the plenitude he meant is the state where there is nothing else to experience. From this negative statement, Nārada cannot grasp the supremacy and all-pervasiveness of the proposed entity. He still wants to know on what plenitude is based. This makes Sanatkumāra put the same fact in the affirmative, with the idea that this will be probably more comprehensible to Nārada. He says that it is based ‘in one’s own grandeur,’²⁹ but he immediately remembers that Nārada is not sufficiently enlightened to understand the real meaning of one’s own grandeur. Therefore, as an afterthought he adds, ‘or rather, not in grandeur.’ Sanatkumāra expresses the reason for his afterthought in the last sentence of the section above, and his description of plenitude in the affirmative appears only in the next section:

VII.25.1a *sa evādhastāt sa upariṣṭāt sa paścāt sa purastāt sa dakṣiṇataḥ sa uttarataḥ sa evedaṃ sarvam iti*

“That alone is below, that above, that westward, that eastward, that southward, [and] that northward; that very [plenitude] is this all.

This understanding of plenitude in its true sense, as Sanatkumāra relates, leads one initially to the indication of I-awareness and finally to the indication of the self. Here is the text and translation of the rest of this section:

VII.25.1b *athāto 'haṃkārādeśa eva aham evādhastād aham upariṣṭād ahaṃ paścād ahaṃ purastād ahaṃ dakṣiṇato 'ham uttarato 'ham evedaṃ sarvam iti*

VII.25.2 *athāta ātmādeśa eva ātmaivādhastād ātmopariṣṭād ātmā paścād ātmā purastād ātmā dakṣiṇata ātmottarata ātmaivedaṃ sarvam iti*
3 *sa vā eṣa evaṃ paśyann evaṃ manvāna evaṃ vijānann ātmaratir ātmakrīḍa ātmamithuna ātmānandaḥ sa svarāḍ bhavati tasya sarveṣu lokeṣu kāmācāro bhavati*

²⁹ The same expression of *svo mahimā* is attested in the ŚB in two different contexts (I.4.2.17 and II.2.4.4–6) but both times we are told that it is speech that is the *svo mahimā* of the deity in question, Agni and Prajāpati respectively. It appears to me that our Upaniṣadic passage wishes to move beyond not only the mundane notion of the grandeur of wealth but also the ritualist’s understanding of grandeur as the majesty of the deity being venerated.

4 *atha ye 'nyathāto vidur anyarājānas te kṣayyalokā bhavanti teṣāṃ sarveṣu lokeṣv akāmacāro bhavati*

“Then [what ensues] from that [awareness of true plenitude] is precisely the indication of I-awareness: ‘I’ itself is below, ‘I’ itself is above, ‘I’ itself is westward, ‘I’ itself is eastward, ‘I’ itself is southward, [and] ‘I’ itself northward, ‘I’ itself is this all.’

“Then [what ensues] from that [I-awareness] is precisely the indication of the self: ‘the self itself is below, the self is above, the self is westward, the self is eastward, the self is southward, [and] the self is northward, the self itself is this all.’

“Only the man who sees this way, thinks this way, and perceives this way, who finds comfort in the self, who is amused with the self, who is paired with the self, and who finds bliss in the self, becomes sovereign master of his own. In all the worlds he will go as he pleases.

“Now those who understand it otherwise than this will have others to rule over them and have perishable worlds; they will not go as they please through these worlds.”

The discourse of Sanatkumāra begins by telling Nārada that one entity is superior to another, and thus prepares a hierarchy of these entities; it does not ask for one entity to be replaced with another. At the top of the hierarchy where one is seeing, hearing, and perceiving nothing other than the self, the continuous climb ends. At this point an attentive seeker of truth finds the indication of I-awareness and therewith the indication of the self. Beyond plenitude comes the indication of one’s own self. At this point one becomes aware of the presence of ‘I’ everywhere and in everything. This awareness, when contemplated further and refined, leads to, or rather itself results in, the indication of the self, that is, I would say the I-awareness impersonalized. Thus here indication does not involve a verbal or other activity but a realization. Thus, after leading Nārada through the steps of hierarchy in the mundane world, Sanatkumāra tells him that at the end of this journey are the two indications of I-awareness and of the self. In this way he answers how to know the self, the question Nārada had asked in the beginning of the discourse.

Lightning and Consciousness are Indications of *Brahman*

Next to be considered are two occurrences, in the later part of the *Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa* (JUB) which comprises the *Kenopaniṣad* (KeU) and a few more sections beyond it.

The first is found in the *Kenopaniṣad* proper (KeU III and IV = JUB IV.20–21). Here a story is told before the *ādeśa* is imparted. I shall not read the whole story but summarize it: *Brahman* won victory for the gods. Over the victory of *brahman* the gods exulted. They thought that the victory was theirs. Being aware of this behaviour of the gods, *brahman* appeared before them but they could not recognize

it. They saw it as a sudden apparition (*yakṣa*), and wondered what it could be. They first asked Agni to recognize it. As Agni ran towards it, he was asked who he was and what power he had. Agni introduced himself and confidently said that he could burn up almost everything on earth. But as the apparition put down a blade of grass and asked him to burn that, he could not do so even with all his strength. He returned from that very point and acknowledged that he was unable to know what the apparition was. Then the gods sent Vāyu, but he too proved useless. Finally, begged by the gods, Indra ran towards the apparition but it disappeared. However, at the exact spot of that apparition, he came across a beautiful woman, Umā, a lady belonging to the Himalaya. He asked her about that sudden apparition. That was *brahman*, she replied, and added that you gods are exulting at the victory of *brahman*. Only from her did Indra thus know that it was *brahman*. At the end of the story, the Upaniṣad tells us that Agni, Vāyu, and Indra came into close contact with *brahman* and therefore superseded other gods; particularly Indra, because he was the first to know *brahman* (cf. KeU III.1–IV.3). The following passage introduces the *ādeśa*:

KeU IV.4–5 *tasyaīṣa ādeśo yad etad vidyuto vyadyutad ā3 itīn*
 = JUB IV.21.4–5 *nyamīmīṣad ā3 ity adhidaivatam*
 athādhyātman yad etad gacchatīva ca manah anena
 caitad upasmaraty abhikṣṇam samkalpaḥ

The indication of this [*brahman*] is that very entity which flashed out of lightning ‘Ah!’ in this way (*ā3 itī*)³⁰ [and] flashed off precisely (*id*) ‘Ah!’ in this way. [Thus]³¹ is with reference to the divine realm.

³⁰ Some scholars (e.g. Olivelle 1998, p. 371; Hume 1921, p. 339; Deussen 1921, p. 208) have interpreted the two expressions of ‘*ā3*’ as two cries of the viewer between seeing a flash of lightning and blinking his/her eyes. Following such an interpretation, one has to say that the viewer cries twice with almost no interval, once as lightning flashes and again as it makes him blink. This interpretation is illogical: nobody waits to blink on seeing a flash of lightning, nor does one cry for the second time before blinking, having once already cried upon seeing the flash. Immediately after the flashing of lightning, one simultaneously cries and blinks, unless (s)he is awestruck and his/her eyes remain open. I should also say that, although crying and blinking are simultaneous, they do not make a correlated pair.

On the other hand, scholars like Thieme (1968, p. 721) and Geldner (1928, p. 149) appear to take ‘Ah!’ for the sound of lightning. With this interpretation, too, there is the same logical absurdity of repetition of the sound. It seems that later Thieme (1972, p. 72) sensed some problem there and interpreted the first ‘Ah!’ as the viewer’s cry and left the second unspecified. Similarly, Slaje (2010, p. 26) has interpreted the first ‘Ah!’ as the sound of lightning and left the second unexplained.

I am, however, in favour of taking both expressions of ‘Ah!’ as an ideophone rather than an imitation of a cry or the flashing sound. This ideophone suggests the manner of the apparition’s appearance and disappearance: all of sudden, astonishingly, arrestingly, and inexplicably. Alternatively, we can say that ‘Ah!’ describes the feeling of surprise and astonishment of Indra as a viewer of this phenomenon, taking it again not as a cry but as an ideophone suggestive of Indra’s sensation. On the appearance of the apparition against the phenomenon of lightning, Indra was no sooner surprised than it disappeared surprising him again.

³¹ Here two *itis*, one quoting ‘*ā3*’ and another signaling the end of *ādeśa* statement with reference to the macrocosmic realm, have been abbreviated into one following the rule of Vedic prose; cf. Hock (1982, p. 59). It is interesting to note that this passage is using *iti* to quote the ideophone ‘*ā3*,’ but not to quote the *ādeśa* statements.

Now with reference to the bodily realm: [it is] that entity to which the mind seems to go and which the faculty of imagination³² constantly recollects by the help of that [mind].

Since this passage is very elliptical, some other slightly different interpretations are possible.³³ I prefer the one above, which happens to be closer to Śaṅkara's interpretation. According to this interpretation, the indication of *brahman* in the macrocosmic realm is that entity which the gods saw as a quickly vanishing apparition. In the microcosmic realm, it is the entity that the mind supposedly reaches and, with the help of the mind, the faculty of imagination recollects.

In this passage, as in ChU III.18 read above (in the first half of Section II), *ādeśa* is presented on both microcosmic and macrocosmic levels. Needless to say, the two statements must be related to the story in the preceding part of the text and tell the same truth reflected on two levels. In the story, out of the lightning *brahman* appears, seen as an apparition, and then disappears in an inexplicable manner. Agni, Vāyu, and Indra acknowledge that they are unable to know it. Indra recollects this phenomenon and also understands its truth only with the help of lovely Umā, who has taken the place of the apparition.

At this point let me remind the reader that the doctrinal part in the first half of the KeU (Sections I-II) focuses on the unknowability and inaccessibility of *brahman*. We are told there that mind cannot reach *brahman*, nor other faculties either (cf. I.3: *na vāg gacchati no manah*). We are also told that one cannot grasp it by mind (cf. I.6: *yan manasā na manute*), it is grasped by the one who acknowledges that he does not know it well. It is reportedly the entity that grasps mind, expresses speech, and so on (cf. I.5–9). It is grasped when it is known through one's awakening (cf. II.2–4), and we are told, "he does not know who thinks he has grasped it" (cf. II.3).

From this story it emerges that *brahman* appears as an entity inspiring awe and respect (*yakṣa*). It moves astonishingly fast, evades cognition, and even the gods do not understand it properly. In the bodily realm we have mind and the faculty of imagination, and the object of cognition towards which they are oriented. The true object of cognition that is *brahman* evades our cognition, but with the help of mind

³² For *saṃkalpa* as a faculty, see ChU VII.4.1–3, where it is placed higher than *manas*, and also and ChU VIII.2.1–10, where *saṃkalpa* is glorified as the source of worldly relations and belongings. However, in BĀU I.5.9 it is identified with *manas*.

³³ For example, it is possible to take *etad* as an adverb. In that case, the factor indicating *brahman* will be the manner of appearance and disappearance of lightning in the first realm, and in the second, the manner the mind seems to travel and the faculty of imagination spin its fancies. I do not prefer this interpretation, because it does not fit tightly with the doctrinal teaching of the KeU. Nevertheless, here is a new translation of the passage along this line:

The indication of this [*brahman*] is that very manner in which (*yad etad*) [it] flashed out of lightning 'Ah!' in this way [and] flashed off precisely (*id*) 'Ah!' in this way. [Thus] is with reference to the divine realm.

Now with reference to the bodily realm: [it is] that manner in which (*yad etad*) mind supposedly moves, and with the help of mind (*anena ca*), in that [very] manner (*etad*) the faculty of imagination makes recollections constantly.

our faculty of imagination can have access to it through mindful recollections of all phenomenal cognitions.

Returning back to the main agenda of this paper, let me conclude with the note that in this passage, too, the literal meaning of the term *ādeśa*, ‘indication,’ is appropriate. The suddenly irradiated flash of light that comes out of lightning and that to which mind and imagination are supposedly oriented are indications of *brahman* in the macro- and microcosmic realms respectively. Here the term *ādeśa* is understood as indication in its agentive sense: that which indicates *brahman*.

***Puruṣa* in the Eye is Indication of *Brahman* Within the Human Being**

In another passage in the same text, two sections after the passage just read, *ādeśa* appears again. The opening portion of the discourse may be summarized as follows: As ‘He’ has entered the human being and resided there, all major divinities bring tribute to him through various channels of the sense faculties. There he has mounted the *brahman*-throne. He is thus *brahman*, and is encompassed with glory and excellence. Who knows him thus is encompassed with glory and excellence (cf. JUB IV.24.1–11). The text then presents the *ādeśa* of this short discourse in the following way:

JUB IV.24.12–13: *tasyaiṣa ādeśo yo ‘yaṃ dakṣiṇe ‘kṣann antaḥ tasya yac chuklaṃ tad ṛcāṃ rūpaṃ yat kṛṣṇaṃ tat sāmnaṃ yad eva tāmraṃ iva babhrur iva tad yajuṣāṃ ya evāyaṃ cakṣuṣi puruṣa eṣa indra eṣa prajāpatīḥ samah pṛthivyā sama ākāśena samo divā samas sarveṇa bhūtena eṣa paro divo dīpyate eṣa evedaṃ sarvaṃ ity upāsitavyam*

The indication of it, [namely, *brahman*,] is this one here who is in the right eye. What it has as white, that is the form of the Ṛc verses; what as black, that [is the form] of the Sāman songs; what as copperlike, reddish, that [is the form] of Yajuṣ formulas. As for the *puruṣa* himself in the eye, he is Indra, he is Prajāpati, [he is] the same with the earth, the same with the [intermediate] space, the same with heaven, the same with all that has existed; he shines beyond heaven; this all is he alone. Thus should man reverently approach and venerate [him].

The *puruṣa* in the right eye is an indication of *brahman* within the human being. In all other cases, *ādeśa* is a verbal entity, in one way or the other; it is a genre, a form of speech, a method implied or narrated, or a particular concept or statement. But in both of its occurrences in the JUB, *ādeśa* refers to an actual physical entity, apparent or real. In this passage it is the human figure seen in the right eye which indicates *brahman* residing within the human being. In the previous passage, too, it is a physical entity: on the outside it is an apparition seen like lightning, and on the

inside it is the inner awareness to be approached by the mind and recollected by the faculty of imagination.

Conclusion

In the early Upaniṣads *ādeśā* can mean an essential message or a core teaching indicated by one particular discourse (BĀU II.1&II.3), or even an entire corpus of Vedic texts (TU II.3.3, ChU III.5). It can also be a subtle underlying idea indicated by another less subtle idea (ChU VII.24 and VII.25). It can also mean something that points to the underlying reality deep in existence or in the text (BĀU II.1&II.3). Such an indication comes mostly in the form of an apt statement (e.g., ChU III.18 and III.19) but rarely also in the form of a relatively elaborate account (ChU VI.1–VI.7). In the case of an apt formulaic statement, there follows an elaboration. The term *ādeśa* is used even to refer to an actual entity, apparent or real, that indicates the reality lying deep in the cosmos or in one's own being (JUB IV [=KeU IV].4–5 and IV.24).

Thus, we know that the connotative range of *ādeśa* covers 'teaching,' 'method,' 'idea,' or 'object.' We might identify a teaching, method, or idea indicated by an *ādeśa*, and identify its content, or even a logical notion behind it, as the extended connotation of the term. However, this much is clear from the analysis of all Upaniṣadic passages in this paper: there is no one connoted meaning that could cover all cases of *ādeśa*. As for denoted meanings, the term never violates its etymological sense of indication: it denotes either an entity being indicated or one that indicates. Therefore, it is best to translate this term literally. Strictly speaking, even in Pāṇini's grammar *ādeśa* primarily refers to 'indication, assignment' of a new element in place of the original element, or to the new element assigned that way.

The function of most of the individual *ādeśas* is to indicate *brahman* or the ultimate reality through a particular entity. In these cases, people can have an impression that *ādeśa* means 'identification' or 'replacement,' but this interpretation cannot fit all occurrences of the term. The second passage from the JUB (IV.24.12–13) declares the *puruṣa* in the right eye to be an *ādeśa* of the *brahman* that has entered the human being. Here, indication fits well as the meaning of *ādeśa* not replacement or identification. The same is true with the *neti neti ādeśa* from the BĀU.

Although in almost all cases a statement labeled as *ādeśā* can be identified as a teaching, in one third of all the cases, four out of twelve: in ChU VII.24 and VII.25, and in both passages from the JUB, the term refers to some actual phenomena indicating another. For example, in ChU VII.24, the feeling that 'I' itself is all and everywhere resulting after the realization of the true sense of plenitude is declared as *ahaṃkārādeśa*, the indication of I-awareness. For this reason I consider all these meanings, 'teaching or instruction,' as extended connotations of the term, which are in fact indicated objects, and indication alone as the primary denoted meaning of the term.

In its earliest occurrence, in the tenth book of the ŚB (X.4.5.1), the term, in the plural, refers to a compendium of Vedic teachings presenting and discussing the principles underlying ritual entities, and obviously to a portion of the text containing them. In two passages from the ChU (III.5) and TU (II.3.3)—in the plural and the singular respectively—*ādeśā* stands for a class of Vedic teachings and is placed parallel to the Ṛc, Sāman, Yajus, and Atharva teachings. In these two passages *Ādeśā* is enthroned in the centre whereas Ṛc and others are placed in the periphery. In the ChU passage it is described as the essence of all essences. These three passages tell us that *ādeśā* was once the formal name of the type of Vedic teachings now classified as Upaniṣad, and also of its corpus, in whatever form and size it had.

The Upaniṣadic *ādeśā* is the fifth type of sacred Vedic utterance beyond the four sacred utterances of the ritual world: *Ṛc* verses, *Yajus* formulas, *Sāman* songs, and *atharvāṅgirasa* spells. This fifth utterance is not only sacred but secret, too, only known to those who approach a learned teacher reverently. Its application is not for the sake of rituals but for the knowledge of the self. Generally, the purpose of such an *ādeśā* is to indicate the ultimate omnipresent reality through a particular entity central to a particular system in a particular realm so that a man enlightened in the Upaniṣadic way realises or even experiences the true reality beyond name and form, and stops worrying for his wellbeing here and hereafter. Moreover, the ultimate reality—in whatever way it is named, as *sat*, *brahman*, *puruṣa*, *ātman*—can only be indicated; it cannot be directly shown. For example, the statement that ‘*brahman* is the sun’ aptly indicates the all-pervasive *brahman* in the macrocosmic realm, but it is not a description or definition of *brahman*. Being a representation/manifestation of *brahman*, the sun indicates the existence and glory of *brahman*. Therefore, the *ādeśā* is purposeful: one meditating on the significance, inevitability, and centrality of the sun in the world will eventually, or suddenly at one point, realize *brahman*.

Acknowledgements I would like to express my gratitude to Prof. Phyllis Granoff (Yale University) and Prof. Christopher Minskowski (Oxford University) for their critical comments on an earlier draft of this paper.

Open Access This article is distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided you give appropriate credit to the original author (s) and the source, provide a link to the Creative Commons license, and indicate if changes were made.

References

- Acharya, D. (2013). *Néti néti*. Meaning and function of an enigmatic phrase in the Gārgya-Ajātaśatru dialogue of *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad* II.1 and II.3. *IJL*, 56, 3–39.
- Acharya, D. (2015). “This world, in the beginning, was phenomenally non-existent”: Āruṇi’s discourse on cosmogony in the *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*. *JIP*, 44(5), 833–864.
- Akratanakul, P. 1990. *Beekeeping in Asia*. FAO (Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations), Agricultural Services. Bulletin 68/4. Rome, Italy. <http://www.fao.org/docrep/x0083e/x0083e00.HTM>.
- AVŚ = *Atharvavedasamhitā*, Śaunaka recension. Second Revised Edition. ed. R. Roth & W. Whitney. Berlin: Ferd. Dümmlers Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1924. For a Translation, see Whitney 1905.
- BĀU = *Bṛhad Āraṇyaka Upaniṣad*. See Böttlingk 1889.

- Bhāṣya* = Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya on the ten principle Upaniṣads. *Upaniṣadbhāṣyam: Śaṅkara's Bhāṣya with the sub-commentaries of Narendra Puri, Aananda Giri, and others*. Volumes I–III. ed. S. Subrahmanya Shastri. Mt. Abu/Varanasi: Mahesh Research Institute, 1979, 1982, 1986.
- Bloomfield, M. (Ed.). (1889). *Kauśikasūtra. The Kauśika Sūtra of Atharva Veda with extracts from the Commentaries of Darila and Kesava*. First Edition: JOAS. (Reprinted 1972, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass).
- Böhtlingk, O. (1889a). *Brhadāranyakopaniṣad in der Mādjhāmdina-Recension. Herausgegeben und übersetzt*. St. Petersburg: Kommissionäre der Kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Böhtlingk, O. (1889b). *Khândogjopaniṣad. Kritisch herausgegeben und übersetzt*. Leipzig: Verlag von H. Haessel.
- van Buitenen, J. A. B. (1962). *The Maitrāyaṇīya Upaniṣad: A critical essay, with text, translation and commentary*. Disputationes Rheno-Trajectinae VI. The Hague: Mouton & Co.
- ChU = Chāndogya Upaniṣad. See Limaye & Vadekar 1958, pp. 68–173.
- Deussen, P. (1921). *Sechzig Upaniṣad's des Veda. Aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt. Dritte Auflage*. Leipzig: F. A. Brockhaus.
- Edgerton, F. (1953). *Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit grammar and dictionary. Volume II: Dictionary*. First Edition: New Haven. (Indian Reprint, 1993, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass).
- Falk, H. (1986). Vedisch upaniṣád. *ZDMG*, 136(1), 80–97.
- Ganeri, J. (2012). *The concealed art of the soul*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Geldner, K. F. (1928). *Vedismus und Brahmanismus*. Religionsgeschichtliches Lesebuch. Zweite erweiterte Auflage, Heft 9. Tübingen: Verlag von J.C.B. Mohr.
- Gonda, J. (1975). *A history of Indian literature. Volume I, fasc. I: Vedic literature (Saṃhitās and Brāhmaṇas)*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harassowitz.
- Gotō, T. (2005). Yājñavalkya's characterization of the Ātman and the four kinds of suffering in early Buddhism. *EJVS*, 12(2), 71–85.
- Halbfass, W. (1990). *India and Europe. An essay in understanding*. First Indian Edition. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Hock, H. H. (1982). The Sanskrit quotative: A historical and comparative study. *Studies in the Linguistic Science*, 12, 39–85.
- Hock, H. H. (2002). The Yājñavalkya cycle in the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad. *JAOS*, 122(2), 278–286.
- Hume, R. E. (1921). *The thirteen principal Upanishads. Translated from the Sanskrit*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ikari, Y. (1969). *ādeśa* ni tsuite [A study on the Upaniṣadic term ādeśa]. *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū (Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies [Tokyo])*, 17(2), 684–689.
- JUB = *Jaiminiya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa*. See Limaye & Vadekar 1958, pp. 377–474.
- Kahrs, E. (1998). *Indian semantic analysis: The nirvacana tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Keith, A. B. (1925). The religion and philosophy of the Veda and Upanishads. Volumes I–II. Harvard Oriental Series, 31–32. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- KeU = *Kenopaniṣad*. See Limaye & Vadekar 1958, pp. 6–10.
- Kuiper, F. B. J. (1960–1961). Interpretation of Chāndogya Upaniṣad III.1.2. In Munshi indological felicitation volume = Bhāratīya Vidyā 20.1–4 (1960) and 21.1–4 (1961) (pp. 36–39).
- Limaye, V. P., & Vadekar, R. D. (1958). *Eighteen principal Upaniṣads*. Poona: Vaidika Saṃśodhana Maṇḍala.
- Michaels, A. (2004). *Hinduism: Past and present* (Original German book, B. Harshav, Trans.). Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- MS = *Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā: Die Saṃhitā der Maitrāyaṇīya-Śākhā*. ed. Leopold von Schroeder. 4 Vols. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1970–1972.
- Müller, M. (1879). *The Upanishads* (Translation). Part 1. The sacred book of the East, 1. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Oldenberg. (1896). Vedische Untersuchungen. *ZDMG*, 50, 423–462.
- Oldenberg. 1889. On the oldest form of the Upanishads. *Trübner's Record: A Journal devoted to the Literature of the East*, 1.5, 148–149.
- Olivelle, P. (1996). Dharmaskandhāḥ and Brahmaskandhāḥ: A study of Chāndogya Upaniṣad 2.23.1. *JAOS*, 116(2), 205–219.
- Olivelle, P. (1998). *The early Upaniṣads. Annotated Text and translation*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- P. = Pāṇini's Aṣṭādhyāyī. *Pāṇini's Grammatik, herausgegeben, übersetzt, erläutert, und mit verschiedenen Indices versehen.* Otto Böhtlingk Leipzig: Haessel, 1887.
- RV = *Ṛgveda*. Die Hymnen des Ṛgveda, ed. Th. Aufrecht. 2 Vols. Indische Studien VI, VII, Berlin.
- Roebuck, V. J. (2000). *The Upaniṣads (Translation)*. Middlesex: Penguin Books.
- ŚB = Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa. *The Śatapatha-Brāhmaṇa in the Mādhyandina-Çākhā with Extracts from the Commentaries of Śāyana, Harisvāmin, and Dvivedagaṅga.* ed. Albrecht Weber. Reprint of the Edition: Berlin 1855. Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1924.
- Slaje, W. (2009). *Upanischaden, Arkanum des Veda. Aus dem Sanskrit übersetzt und herausgegeben.* Frankfurt: Verlag der Weltreligionen.
- Slaje, W. (2010). "Nēti nēti". *On the meaning of an Upaniṣadic citation of some renown in Hindu texts and Western minds.* Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Abhandlungen der Geistes- und sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse. Jahrgang 2010, Nr. 4. Mainz: Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur/Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag.
- Thieme, P. (1966). *Upanischaden. Ausgewählte Stücke.* Reclam Universal-Bibliothek 8723. (Reprinted 1994, Stuttgart: Reclam).
- Thieme, P. (1968). *Ādeśā.* In *Mélanges d'indianisme: à la mémoire de Louis Renou* (pp. 715–723). Paris: E. de Boccard.
- Thieme, P. (1972). Sprachmalerei. *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, 86, 64–81.
- TU = *Taittirīya Upaniṣad*. See Olivelle 1998, pp. 288–313.
- Visigalli, P. (2014). Continuity and change in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* VI.1–4. In G. Ciotti, A. Gornall, & P. Visigalli (Eds.), *Puṣpikā. Tracing ancient India, through texts and traditions. Contributions to current research in indology. Volume 2* (pp. 191–216). Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Wezler, A. (1972). Marginalien zu Pāṇinis Aṣṭādhyāyī I: sthānin. *Zeitschrift für vergleichende Sprachforschung*, 86, 7–20.
- Whitney, W. D. (1905). *Atharva-Veda Saṃhita: Translated with a critical and exegetical commentary. Revised and brought nearer to completion and edited by Charles Rockwell Lanman*, in 2 Vols. with continuous pagination. Harvard Oriental Series 7–8. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.